

Power becomes demonic when this unselfconscious sharing is broken. The human spectrum then breaks down into particularized gradations of power-consciousness. The perspective of power which was a whole and largely unconscious assumption is splintered into narrow perspectives. At one end of this spectrum are those who tend to be passive about power; at the other end are those who tend to be active. We may call them, in popular coinage, the quietists and the politicians. Whereas before power was instinctively received and responded to as a gift, now it is rationally confronted as a challenge, or a menace, and calculatingly reacted against by manipula-

1984

ROBERT
MOORE

We have to live in the world of 1984 . . . what sort of world is it going to be . . . what are the alternatives?

The white, Western capitalist societies ranged against the coloured Asian, African and Latin American countries; haves versus have-nots, colour against colour.

A socialist world sharing natural resources and the products of men's labour equally between themselves, only functional divisions between nations (if they can be said to exist). Fair shares for all, men free from the drudgery of the economic round, the material grind; free to be creating or free to be destroying.

Or a socialist world except for a frightened and isolationist North America; an America in a quasi-nineteenth-century nationalist, militaristic backwood, the social insecurity of its people feeding the political insecurity of its generals.

Or the capitalists of the world dividing the nations; the élites drawn together for mutual protection (including those of Russia) with the bomb, ranged against the workers of the world, the always-have-hads versus the never-have-hads.

And within the nations? What of Britain (or Airstrip Two)? One big, happy family; or the old class divisions, privilege and air of decaying aristocracy. What sort of environment? Buchanan or bust; control or chaos; will he think it as silly then to be allowed to take a car into a town as we think it silly for private individuals to own roads now? How far will our economy still depend on the motor car? How far will similar monopolies in steel, chemicals and food control the quality of our life and political decisions? In their pursuit of private profit will they still hold the nationalised industries to ransom?

Who will control the means of production and what will production be a means to? war or peace, well-being for all or profits for a few? And what does this mean on an international scale? Will our well-being be catered for in a hermetically sealed flat, with TV and built-in world-wide Bingo for each individual?

What are the means to the ends that we think most desirable? Until now we have preferred legislation to revolution, but when the cards are down, as they

tion. The political person tries to manipulate power towards him. The quietist, equally firmly, tries to manipulate himself away from the responsibility of power. In both cases the innocent lordship over creation, spoken of in Genesis, is corrupted by a pseudo knowledge of good and evil. The tragedy of most communities which fail is that both the politician and the quietist recognise and check their inclinations too late. It is as hideously true that weakness corrupts and absolute weakness corrupts absolutely as that power corrupts, relatively, and absolutely.

(Continued on page 25)

are now for 'responsible' British capitalism over South African trade, or as they will be for the motor-car trade or property-development companies over environmental planning in this country, we won't be asking for marginal concessions any more. Through elections we can change the actors in the political scene—but how do we sack the script-writers and write our own plot?

Indeed, how can we play at all? Can we continue to play politics with the aristocratic gamesmanship of the cricket or rugger field in a technologised but purposeful society? Legislation, revolution, planning... can these bring happiness and fullness of life? But how can we talk about happiness and fullness until we have laid the basis in full bellies, peace and an equally significant membership of society for each citizen?

Violence: once unleashed, uncontrollable, releasing all the worst in human nature, old scores settled, new cycles of vengeance set in motion. Destruction: a thousand motivations caught up in one orgy of sub-humanity; 'the cause' often thrown away by the very use of violence or lost in the practice of violence itself. Has the good in the outcome of the use of violence ever outweighed the evil created in its use?

How can we strip the rich man or the powerful man of his privileges and power without hating the man? When does envy and malice come into our own motivation? What will it do to the haughty, rich, privileged man living in his own world to be humbled, left as other men, brought into a world of reality where he no longer has the power to buy the souls of men, to find himself no longer God; will this hurt or destroy him—must he suffer; must these few suffer that the many may enjoy the benefits?

Non-violence: an impossible gospel for those whose needs are urgent, whose situation is intolerable. What right have we, in comfort, to preach it to those who are oppressed to the point where they feel their humanity denied? Non-violence can conceal a more undesirable form of violence that is psychological. Often this is seen in the humiliation of those against whom it is used; the British Government humiliated in India; the police humiliated in dragging away sitters-down—they are put at a disadvantage; they are subject to strains that they know not how to control.

What is non-violence? Can I be consistently non-violent in all my behaviour? How can I preach non-violence when I have done emotional violence to my girl, intellectual violence to my mentors, mental violence to my own nagging, unwanted thoughts? This is the price-list for two kinds of processes; somewhere down the line we've to pay. In the end I think I'm for violence—perhaps because I think I understand this better—but I don't like this and continue to preach non-violence and call myself a pacifist.



Yet the enormity of the price I am prepared to pay horrifies me. Just as the power to manipulate the consent of men, to make them choose your brand of soap, choose between the two alternative policies you offer, to decide on the issues you have defined as relevant, just as the power to do these things becomes absolute, so the violent means to change this becomes absolute. Is it to be a 'Workers' Bomb'? It would seem to be if we want the majority of humankind to write the script to the drama they have to act out—yet the very means they have to do this will destroy us all. But we don't have the Bomb. 'They' have the Bomb.

The only way out, if it is not already too late, is for the parsons, academics and technicians to cease being prompters, publicity agents, critics, make-up men, costumiers, lighting experts, etc., for the production they have put on for us—yet in which we have to act (and applaud). But there seems little chance of this.

The only way out won't be taken—the present system leading to destruction, either physical or moral; the way to change the system destructive beyond measure.

So whatever we want for 1984 we can't sit and wait for it to turn up—a set of alternatives face us here and now; to be non-active is to be actively for maintaining the present course; to be apolitical is to be political; if it's political to condemn apartheid it's not non-political to keep silent about it; if you're against apartheid, how can you logically not be against the class system in this country, and how do you think you are going to change it? Or is it better to use it—and start climbing yourself?

If, like me, you have a political creed, its dangers are outlined above. Fascism and Communism as systems are violent; they take away from men the right to choose. But if I have to choose between the two I will choose Communism; it has moral and ethical content and high ideals. I don't know what democracy means; I don't like totalitarianism. But Stalin was probably right; I'm sure Nkrumah is. A party planned on a policy of Socialism in this country would of necessity destroy the whole basis, the whole *raison d'être* of the Tory party.

If like me you believe in Socialism, in the potentialities of scientific planning, in the freeing of men so that they may use their infinite creativity, free from privilege, oppression, deprivation, free from believing the myth foisted on them that their 'betters' are born to rule them and that they are incapable of running their own society; and if, like me, you aspire to be a Christian, then tell me what it means to live creatively *in this world* where absolute powers, absolute means of violence and irreconcilable conflicts become more and more irreversibly absolute.

Revolution is a word which has overtones of terror, often of persecution and nearly always of undesirability, and it is difficult for us to understand the people and the nations for whom this word suggests hope, renewal and freedom. Yet for many people in Latin America today these are some of the meanings that they give the word 'revolution'. And this is not surprising, for in this vast continent, which is almost unknown to those who live outside it, there are forces at work in the whole of society which bring depression—social, economic and political, to the majority of the people.

The students whom I met recently in Latin America were all extensively con-

REVOLUTION

cerned about the conditions which exist in their society—the unequal distribution of wealth, the often corrupt political activities of the rulers and the vicious economic struggle which handicaps the government of their countries because of the great outflow of interest from foreign investments. When one listens to them explaining and analysing the factors involved in their present situation, one's immediate reaction is of despair, for even though more than 100 years have elapsed since political independence, the economic stranglehold created by foreign investment and ownership of the most lucrative industries has made them dependent in an even more obnoxious way than the society with political colonialism. Again the apparent distrust of many of the wealthy citizens has led them to invest most of their capital outside the continent.

How can one begin to contemplate action which will remedy the conditions caused by both of these economic factors? The answer is often discovered by these students in one of the many versions of Marxism, current in Latin America today. The consequence of this is that the leadership which the universities in these countries should be giving to society through their graduates and undergraduates tends to be minimal. This is so either because the political opinion of the student or graduate is left-wing and therefore unacceptable to the government which tends to be right-wing and often reactionary, or else the complexity of the situation causes the graduate to compromise his revolutionary vision with the demands of the bourgeois society in which he finds himself playing a professional role. Nevertheless, for many people revolution contains within it germs of hope and possibilities of freedom and renewal.

Why should there be this great dichotomy in the use of this word amongst Latin Americans and the way in which we use it. This is a problem and possibly a crucial one in terms of future development of the world. . . . It must be said that there are very good reasons why revolution for us has the overtones that it has. Any look at the situations in history to which the word is applied include the elements of bloodshed and murder, a lack of freedom and the suppression of many of the people who have been part of the revolutionary situation. For example in the French revolution the inspirational ideas were of liberty, equality and fraternity, and much was done to achieve the first two of these aims. Leaving aside criticisms of communism, the same thing can be said of what has happened in Russia, Hungary and Cuba though most of us in the West would want to see this in strictly relative terms. What has been absent from all of these situations seems to be the possibility of realising the third idea behind the French revolution, that of fraternity. It is quite clear that in the revolutionary situation the possibility of maintaining human relationships, either at an individual or at a group level,

by SALTERS STERLING

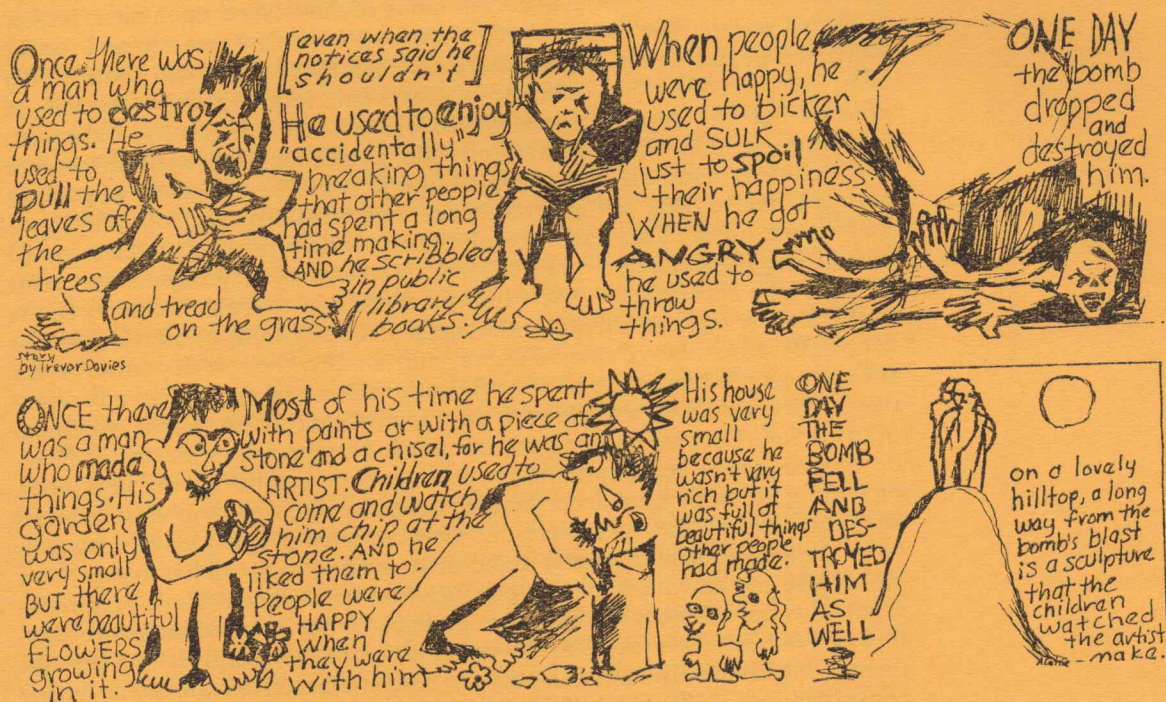
across the frontiers of conflicting goals and actions, has not so far been particularly successful. It is apparently easier for the dominating group in society in the revolutionary situation to exterminate or at least suppress those who are not likely to be loyal to it, than to work out together a common purpose and action for the society which is in revolution.

There seem to be two reasons why it has been impossible in the past to accommodate the idea of fraternity in the revolutionary process. First of all a strict adherence to ideology prevents the adjustment of principles to the needs of the revolutionary situation, and secondly the interpretation of revolution itself as a dramatic existential event. The first of these, the adherence to ideology, is a general problem; it applies not only to the revolutionary situation—it is destructive of human relationships and prevents objectivity, even of the most relative sort, in any situation. This is being increasingly recognised as something for which we must work out an answer pretty quickly. The second, the cataclysmic interpretation of the revolution, is more persistent, less clearly understood and requires a great deal of thought. It belongs to the static understanding of society in which society is believed to be slow moving and developing, if moving at all.

The actualities of contemporary world societies are far from this understanding. We must learn to see and understand our society as a particularly dynamic phenomenon. This is not so difficult in a situation where the dramatic potential of revolution is maximal. But it is much more difficult to understand when a situation is lethargic. That this should be so is obvious, even from personal experience, for where a situation of tension occurs, those involved are increasingly ready to act and interpret. Somehow or other we have got to act and to think in these lethargic situations knowing that they also are moving and revolutionary, the difference being one of speed and complexity. It is difficult to see how we can begin to think and act in these terms. In spite of the rise and value of the discipline of sociology, society tends to be for us an optional extra into which or out of which we can contract, as the conditions suit us personally. This is an individualistic approach to life and is not particularly helpful. We must somehow understand that society is a particularly creative thing both in itself and in its movement.

This understanding is important, for here it may be possible to relate society and revolution. Revolution is certainly a process albeit sometimes a painful one. Society, when it is taken seriously, likewise has a greater creative potential. The fusion of the two occur when the creative role of society in relation to its members is absent, or only minimally present, or present in an exclusive area. Revolution in society therefore is the creation of a situation in which creative action on the part of groups or persons becomes possible. Revolution cannot determine the direction of the movement of society, but it can make possible that movement. The implications of this are enormous; it means first of all taking collective responsibility for both the nature and the content of the society in which we live, even if the elements of creation are in a major way present. But even if this is so, because society like history is a moving and dynamic process, the role of challenge must always be present. In the recent past this challenge has often been present in the form of ideology. Somehow a new form of challenge is necessary—challenge which takes its inspiration from a concern for human persons, disattached from ideology. British students have found challenge very difficult especially in the post-Second World War period. The issues in British and World Society have become so complex and often appear so remote that both the how and the what of challenge lack clarity. It may be irresponsible to suggest that a little less concern for profundity and a little more for adventure might break the present stalemate. But perhaps we should adventure into new forms of political demonstration and community living, which allow for an expression of personal concern that arises

from the experience of the pressures present in society. When this happens, revolution can and will occur and we shall discover that the processes of revolution need no longer be fraught with its former depressive characteristics. Instead, it will be what it symbolises for the Latin American, the process of hope, of recreation and of freedom.



THE IRRELEVANCE OF LIBERALISM

Disenchantment

Once, in my middle teens, I was presented by a rather earnestly-minded mentor of mine with a booklet on careers. I remember little of it, except the effect—a nausea, disillusion, a shock at the triviality of it all. The list had been comprehensive, excessively so, and yet of all the scores of careers listed not one really interested me. There were two or three which might have had possibilities, but, apart from teaching, they were mostly remedial, patching up the misfits in society.

I have since found that this shock, the sudden awareness that the adult world would not prove as open and infinite and exciting as once we had imagined, was not a purely personal experience but seems to be astonishingly common to our generation. There has seemed no direct way in which we could live out the values, the ideals which we grew up with. Of course, it's not true, most of us have now found that virtually anything we put ourselves to, any kind of occupation, can be made creative; 'It's a question of our own attitude to it' we say. But is it?

robin
fielder